



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BOOK REVIEWS.

Geschichte der deutschen Landwirthschaft. By DR. THEODOR FREIHERR VON DER GOLTZ. Erster Band. Stuttgart and Berlin: Cotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger, 1902. 8vo, pp. vi + 485.

THE aim of Director von der Goltz is to give the history of the cultivation as well as of the cultivators of the soil during the various phases of political and social development in Germany. Hence German husbandry and agrarian conditions are treated from a more strictly economic and agrarian point of view than in the well-known and broadly planned work of Inama-Sternegg, with which the author to some extent compares his own. The volume here reviewed discusses the changes which German agriculture has undergone from its beginnings to the end of the eighteenth century, when it was clearly understood that reform was necessary, if in this line Germany was to keep abreast with the surrounding nations and satisfy the needs of its own population. This general outline is again divided into three parts. The first extends from the beginning of German settlements to the economic change caused by the administration of Charles the Great; the second from the ninth century to the middle of the eighteenth — almost a thousand years, in which agriculture underwent few, if any, important changes. The third part concerns itself with the attempts largely made by writers (specialists on the subject, the so-called *Kameralists*) and by the Prussian kings in the later eighteenth century to revolutionize agrarian conditions either by instruction and argument or by peremptory command to mend the evils caused by centuries of sloth, ignorance, and sheer brutality. The continuation of this reform work and the profound changes which landed interests have undergone in the nineteenth century are to be the subjects of another volume still to be issued.

In the first part the author, as indicated, discusses the semi-nomadic life of the early Germans, which at first consisted in sporadic cultivation of a few favored spots, and later a constant use of one strip of land for grain, another for grazing. Gradually came a clearer understanding of the necessity of rotation of crops, a process which must

have lasted some hundred years before it fully attained its completion in the three- and four-field system—for centuries the method common to all Germany. Director von der Goltz thinks that the Germans learned the systematic treatment of the soil from the Romans. The two-field system which was so characteristic of Roman agriculture, and which the author also refers to, was undoubtedly the foundation upon which the three-field system was reared; but it is our private opinion that, inasmuch as the three-field system is not known to us previous to the Christian era (*cf.* p. 77), it was an improvement brought about by the missionaries and the monks who undertook the care of providing for others besides themselves, and who had to reckon with a season when nothing was to be gotten from the soil. The novel feature of summer and winter grain necessarily put the ground under a more intensive cultivation and caused the desired larger quota to come from the soil.

At this early period the *Markgenossenschaft*, with its possession and cultivation in common, was a necessary economic organization. It evidently compelled as much as it restrained, thus creating a, for the time, perhaps wholesome medium of individual effort. Other associations embraced the rights to possession and use of water and fields for grazing. One point made by the book which is new to us, and which sheds much light upon mediæval conditions, is that even the settlers who were not gathered in a village, but occupied each an individual homestead with adjoining fields, were not allowed nor expected to sow or reap according to their desire, but subject to the same rigid regulations which prevailed in the village community. Everyone was expected to do as his neighbor did, the *Flurzwang* penetrated everywhere and restricted each individual even in regard to the use of his property (p. 91). The reflections which this fact gives rise to—whether such stringent restrictions in the view of the community served as measures of self-preservation at a period when energy was needed for the works of war rather than peace, or whether they were merely the survival of tribal rules which exercised their retarding influence even after individual ownership was recognized—these reflections the author wholly passes by. His domain is not the elucidation of such more or less obscure problems of which economic history at this period suggests so many, but the plain narration of evident facts.

The author's remarks concerning the rise of a peasant class are interesting. It is clear that where everyone subsists wholly on the

output of his land, the farmer, if he must also be a soldier, frequently runs the risk of starvation when the war is over and he returns to his untilled fields. Either the country must relinquish its demands upon his willingness to defend it, or he must face an emergency for which he knows no remedy. As a result the defense is left to a class which refuses every other permanent occupation, and the farmer is led to resign his privileges as well as his duties as a soldier and devote himself wholly to the cultivation of the soil. From this stage there is in an uninventive age, but a step to the yielding of other rights as well; and by the might of the sword he is soon reduced to economic as well as political insignificance; becomes the holder of property rather than the owner, and the toiler for the benefit of others rather than for himself. The soil, the only definite source of income and livelihood, claims its victims, as it were, and the land, by the aid of concurring political and social circumstances, comes finally to be one vast mass of interdependent tenures that spreads like a net over all property and holds every individual in its meshes.

As an example of domestic government on a large scale the author gives a review of the domainial administration inaugurated by Charles the Great (pp. 98-115) in his famous capitulary, where everything is regulated to the minutest detail. He finds that the careful account of every item of inventory, of expenditure and profit asked for by the emperor surpasses even what can be expected in the way of bookkeeping on a large and well-managed estate today. The author seems to entertain the opinion that from this epoch-making capitulary the church learned its lesson of management. To us, however, it appears that the original debt must lie on the emperor. But that Charles the Great was able by his legislation to teach the lay aristocracy how to govern their possessions is in itself of sufficient importance to gain for him the high praise as innovator and guide for a thousand years which the author justly claims for him.

The second division of the book, which discusses agrarian conditions from the time of Charles the Great to the middle of the eighteenth century, and occupies more than one-third of the volume, is in many respects its most interesting portion. The author describes the general status of Germany, the foundation of cities and the rise of new classes in the burghers and the knights, which between them again helped to isolate and make more defenseless than ever the third and politically almost ignored class, the peasantry. The tillers of the soil, owing to their forced or inherited political and social inactivity, were

caught between the two vastly more active factors and sadly ground down. Yet of the two the burgher class, by its wider interests and its increasing need of performers of manual labor, offered a refuge to the overoppressed peasant; while the military class, the knights, whose sole fortune consisted in the peasants settled on their land and bound to provide for them, their household and retainers, in course of time left no scheme untried for getting all the profit from the transaction which the proprietary rights of the one party and the dependent and defenseless position of the other party would present. As the centuries progressed, this peculiar exploitation of labor, which the author ascribes to the inherited distaste of the Germans for work and their love of war, became aggravated rather than ameliorated; and perhaps one of the most instructive things in the book is the author's detail concerning the *gemessene Leistungen*, which soon changed into *ungemessene*. The harrassed and distracted toiler who only too truly called himself poor *Kuonrad* (*kein Rat*), finally rose in rebellion and *die Bauernkriege* and their results are doubtless, for superciliousness and inhumanity, among the most abominable and barbarous events in German history. They suggest vividly the traditional contempt and utter disregard of the German privileged classes for the ordinary citizen and their inferiors, which seems to be as much in evidence now as ever. The pathos of the situation previous to and after the Peasants' War, is peculiarly enhanced by the author's mode of speaking of the misery of these countless beings. Von der Goltz's treatment of the matter is *durchaus sachlich*, almost superhumanly so. Not for a moment does any sentimental bias in the one or the other direction suggest itself to the reader, but if inclined to side with either the author seems prone to see the justice of the claims of the privileged class rather than those of the unprivileged, in conformity with the old truly feudal notion that *Unterthanen müssen unterthänig sein*; the obscure toiler is evidently born to toil, and there is no use trying to alter the divinely appointed relation. Luther's share in the outcome of the Peasants' War seems to receive his indorsement and absolute sanction. He repeatedly emphasizes Luther's *tiefe sittliche Entrüstung* which led him to utter such decidedly *unsittliche* demands for the destruction of those who had trusted above all to his mediatorship and calming influence. No eloquence or reference to the roughness of the times can excuse Luther's lack of simple human dignity nor his lack of apostolic goodness on this occasion. That the peasants, broken in heart and annihilated in fortune, totally despaired of the justice of God and man alike was

chiefly Luther's work; and the black cloud of intolerance and hatred which settled over Germany and broke in the horrible struggle of thirty years seems but the just reward for the hideous doings of the previous period. Even before this time, however, the change of conditions caused by the change of habitation, especially by the extensive colonization of the districts east of the Elbe, had brought no particular relief. The author shows lucidly (pp. 137-53) that the amalgamation of the German settlers with the Slav population made matters in some respects even worse. It is certainly worth while for American students, who as a rule are but scantily informed about this important phase in the history of Germany, to read this section.¹

The political results of the Thirty Years' War are as a rule better known than the economic. The author very ably summarizes the effects. The reduction of the peasants to complete economic dependence reached its height in the half century or more after the war, while the country lay stunned and bleeding after its fearful trials. The demand for capital and need of economic concentration in order to build up anew what had been partly or wholly destroyed caused the landowners to deprive their tenants of their holdings and reduce the larger number of the peasant farmers to serfs and *glebae adscripti*, as old Rome had done under the emperors. Every hope of improvement of their condition seemed gone from the wretched beings, who were driven to work with blows and could hardly call their souls their own. The enlightened despotism of that and the following period, however, saved them from the civil and moral death which seemed to be their final lot. Director von der Goltz mentions in this connection with particular praise such princes as Frederic William I. and Frederic II. of Prussia. Their efforts to protect the peasants on their own domains, and to reform not only the economic but the social misfortune under which the peasants labored, certainly place them in the foremost ranks as the benefactors of their country and subjects. The gigantic enterprises begun and completed by them in draining marshes and winning land for cultivation and new settlement deserve the admiration of the present day. The influx of new blood and new ideas with the colonists from other countries who settled by thousands in these new districts was an even greater gain. Both Frederic William I.

¹ It is but characteristic of the ignorance of this period prevailing in America that a work on colonization issued some years ago and pretending to treat of every phase connected with colonization at all periods contained not a word about this important movement, to which the present German empire so largely owes its existence.

and Frederic II. were indefatigable in their attempts to improve the condition of the peasant class. Frederic William I. in 1718 and 1719 abolished serfdom on his domains, and Frederic II. in 1773 abolished serfdom in the royal province of Prussia, without, however, thereby liberating the peasants as completely from their status as *glebae adscripti* as the terms of the edict might at first suggest (p. 424), or even effecting any substantial relief from their customary unlimited services and dues. The king was anxious to keep sun and wind even. But the royal eye watched closely the effect of the various patents and rescripts issued, and the royal power tried consistently to ease the burdens of the peasantry. The way in which the great king made his will known to some of his noble subjects who had been found guilty of inhuman treatment of their peasants is decidedly worth reading (p. 430). No wonder *der alte Fritz* is still cited as a miracle of fairness and shrewdness at the same time, and his name cherished. Von der Goltz points out how neither the king nor his contemporaries saw that to release the peasants from their customary dues and make them independent landowners would necessitate the rise of a class of day laborers who depended on their wages—a fourth (country) estate, as it were, on whose readiness and number the landlord would have to rely for the cultivation of his fields and the harvesting of his grain, the problem that now makes farming such precarious business all over the world. Conditions, however, had come to such a pass that half measures seemed wholly inadequate, and the king's command and eager example naturally contributed to more or less sweeping changes in the conditions of the peasants.

Another of the great king's efforts to improve the economic situation generally was directed toward extending the opportunity for loans among the landowners, whose lack of capital seriously hampered their desire for improvement. In order to invite capital, however, the proper valuation of property, the just assessment of taxes, and other regulations for raising the value of property must first take place, and the state and its representative, the government, was naturally the one to see that this was done in a way to inspire confidence. After having established the proper institutions, the king left the working of the monetary question to private initiative or to concerns of more official character, such as the *landwirthschaftliche Immobiliarkreditinstituten* which managed the affairs of their respective provinces and kept capital as much as possible employed at home.

In regard to improvements in agricultural methods, the tillage of

fields, and the management of live stock, the efforts of such energetic organizers and promoters as both Frederic William I. and Frederic II. had in many ways been preceded by those of various writers, the already mentioned *Kameralists*, specialists on economic problems of the time, who had treated the subject of husbandry and cultivation more or less scientifically and had ardently advocated improvements. The natural sciences as well as scientific discussion, were still in their infancy, but the first step in both directions was already taken, and societies for the improvement of agriculture had been formed which kept alive the interest and offered instruction by reports and articles. Chemistry had started on its wonderful road of discovery, and agriculturists naturally benefited from the new incentive to observation and study thus given. The question of the composition of the soil and the way in which plants receive their nourishment was one of the first to be raised, and the gradual understanding of the physical conditions necessary for growth resulting therefrom, in many ways revolutionized cultivation. A not inconspicuous part of the book is devoted to relating the changes in methods and views thus brought about and to a chronological account of the writers who thus influenced the time.

The author can truly be said to have done justice to any reasonable demand for completeness. Yet, although he tries to be but summary in his accounts of events, the portions of his book which discuss political and social conditions are by all means the larger ones. Curiously enough in a footnote (p. 254) the author expresses his intention to avoid repetition, but repetition is just the fault with which the reader is apt to charge his book, and particularly in those portions devoted to matters of general interest. Fustel de Coulanges's peculiar method of argumentation has made repetition of statements and phrases almost a fad among historical writers, but von der Goltz in his book has no hostile theory to confute, and the frequent reiteration of phrases undeniably impairs the pleasure otherwise experienced.

Director von der Goltz thinks it is far more difficult to write the history of agriculture from its own point of view, *i. e.*, that of fitness of soil, climate, population, modes of cultivation, commercial intercourse and influence of ideas, than from that of the general historical development, and we cannot but agree with him. So comprehensive a work may, indeed, never be written, and if ever attempted will consist largely of monographs. The ultimate success of von der Goltz's own work, however, will largely depend upon the volume which is to come. The present volume, as far as exactness of knowledge

broad treatment, large fund of information, and a pleasant style are concerned, readily holds its own among its kind. It is, as the author points out, the fruit of twenty-five years of arduous studies and a long record as leader of an agricultural institution, and will, no doubt, prove a very welcome contribution to the rather scant supply of literature upon the subject and an appreciated source of information to the students of political economy in this country as well as abroad.

A. M. WERGELAND.

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING.

Les systèmes de culture; Les spéculations agricoles. Par FRANÇOIS BERNARD. Paris: Masson & C^{ie}, 1898. 8vo, pp. xi+392.
Géographie agricole de la France et du monde. Par J. DU PLESSIS DE GRENÉDAN. Paris: Masson & C^{ie}, 1903. 8vo, pp. xx+424.

Précis de géographie économique. Par MARCEL DUBOIS et J. G. KERGMARD. Paris: Masson & C^{ie}, 1903. 8vo, pp. viii+837.

THE book of Professor Bernard deserves more space than its bulk indicates, because it is interesting, and still more because American agriculture is interested in precisely such literature as this. The strenuous exertions that are now making to extend agricultural education in this country and to adapt methods of agriculture to the highest economic achievement make it extremely desirable that American students and the well-read American farmer should have at their disposal a systematic and inspiring work on the economics of agriculture, which should not repel by an array of statistics, but should invite by its consistency and by its well-maintained point of view. Such a book is that of Professor Bernard, and it is much to be regretted that it has not long ago been translated and adapted to conditions prevailing in the United States.

The only work written for American students which professes to cover the ground of rural economics, with which the reviewer is acquainted, is simply a restatement of orthodox economics with the rural motive written in at certain places, and with some rural statistics interpolated, but not incorporated into the text.

Far different is Professor Bernard's conception of rural economics. It is not to be a rehash of political economy, but an array of rural economic interests, treated of course with reference to accepted princi-